

REMARKS BY  
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- Thank you, Heather (Bowman, Director of Environmental Affairs, EIA)
  - And thanks also to CEA, especially Doug Johnson, for giving EPA this opportunity to announce our Plug In To Recycling Campaign
- Two months ago I flew to Pittsburgh to visit an electronics recycling site and present an award to an electronics manufacturing company: American Video Glass, a subsidiary of Sony
  - As I landed in Pittsburgh that day, I couldn't shake the sense that I was standing precisely at the point in time and space where the past ends and the future begins
  - Not too many years ago, Pittsburgh was the center of America's industrial muscle, blanketed by steel mills and smokestacks that have since disappeared
  - Now it's home to forward-looking companies, like the one I visited, that makes the glass panels for video monitors
  - From rolled steel to video monitors: I thought that was about as compelling a picture of the future as I was likely to see
- But then I came here
  - If you want to know what the future will look like, just walk the floor of the Las Vegas Convention Center

- Some of the coolest stuff imaginable can be found here
- Everyone knows electronics are the wave of the future, and they will change all our lives in ways we can only dimly appreciate today
- Young people especially understand this, and my kids are no exception
  - One of the things I love about my job is that it makes me a hero in the eyes of my two kids
  - About a year ago, in the middle of the anthrax cleanup on Capitol Hill, I took them down there to watch the cleanup operations
  - Some time later I heard one of them say to a friend: “My mommy is saving the planet and beating up Bin Laden”
  - But that’s nothing compared to what they’ll say when they hear what I’m doing today
    - Getting a first-hand look at all the latest gizmos and games
    - Meeting the leaders of the world’s most prominent electronics manufacturing companies
  - I’m sure that will make me, in their eyes, very cool indeed
- This convention gives the world a fascinating look into the future
  - Your industry makes most of what the world will use to communicate, entertain, process information, and conduct business in the century ahead
  - You are building the future today
    - My kids know it intuitively, all kids know it intuitively
  - You’re building their world, and you’re building it now
- At EPA we believe that we are protecting the future today
  - The Agency was created to think about the long-term public health and

environmental implications of what people do today

- And then take action to make things better
- Clearly, if you're building the future today, and EPA is protecting the future today, then we have a lot in common
  - Both of us have tomorrow on our minds
  - Both of us see the link between today's actions and tomorrow's quality of life
  - We share many of the same aspirations and the same challenges
  - So we have a very big incentive to work together to reach our respective goals, which in the end turns out to be one common goal: making a better future for everyone
- In many ways, your products are making my job easier
  - The electronics revolution has the potential to do a lot of good for environmental quality and long-term sustainability
  - Quicker and easier information exchange across wires and through space reduces our need to move people, products, and information by conventional means
    - That in turn cuts down on traffic congestion, saves energy, and reduces pollution
  - It won't be long before chips installed in products will tell us what is in them, how they can be repaired, and how best to handle them when they're discarded
  - On an even larger scale, advanced super computers are helping us understand our environment better so we can reduce our impact on it and correct problems that seem unsolvable today

- But your products also pose some serious environmental challenges, some environmental risks, and one of them is the flip side of your astounding success
  - That is, the electronics waste stream
  - You're selling so many products, and coming out with new and improved versions so fast, that the electronics waste stream is quickly turning into a river
  - As citizens trade up to the latest TVs, VCRs, DVDs, PDAs, cell phones, and computers, more and more obsolete products end up in the nations attics, basements, garages, and garbage cans
    - I probably have five old cell phones, three answering machines, two CRT monitors, and a VHS machine in my basement alone
  - Over 250 million computers are destined to be obsolete by 2005
    - I've read that last year more computers became obsolete than were sold
  - I've also read that by 2005 over 100 million cell phones will be thrown away each year
  - If we don't do something about this river of waste, we're likely to drown in our own success
- But it's not just the mass of products discarded that threatens our future
  - It's their toxicity
  - Many electronic products contain health-threatening materials like lead and mercury
    - Depending on size and model, a cathode ray tube can contain 2-

4 pounds of lead or more

- The toxic materials contained in your products can pose risks to public health and the environment if they're not disposed of properly
- The third argument for reducing the electronics waste stream is resource conservation
  - Many of your products are made with highly-engineered parts and materials
  - If they're simply thrown away at the end of their useful lives, that would be a terrible waste, particularly because their useful lives are so short
  - By recycling, we can save money, conserve energy, and prevent a lot of pollution, including greenhouse gases
- This is one of our most pressing, and shared, challenges: reducing that river of electronics waste, limiting its toxicity, and finding more ways to reuse components so we can cut back on natural resource consumption
- I'm delighted to say today that our response to this challenge has already begun
  - Your industry is already stepping up, federal and state governments are stepping up, and in many cases we're working together to reduce and reuse the electronics waste stream, and diminish its toxicity
  - We've made a great start on a job that's critically important to the future quality of life for people everywhere
- Your industry as a whole has shown its concern by the simple fact that you've included Environmental Awareness Day – today – as part of the convention agenda

- This is a first for you
- And I applaud you for it
- Think of what it would mean for our country's future if every industry included an Environmental Awareness Day as part of its annual convention
- Your industry is showing the world what environmental stewardship means
- Individual electronics companies are also taking some very progressive, and effective, actions
  - Sony, Panasonic, and Sharp are teaming with local governments and recyclers to collect and recycle their products
  - IBM, Hewlett-Packard, and Dell offer their customers a mail back service for recycling used computers
  - AT&T Wireless is inviting Americans to drop off their old cell phones at stores across the U.S.
  - Best Buy has conducted electronics collection events at many of its stores
  - Recycle America, a subsidiary of Waste Management, is sending inspectors to their electronics recycling partners in Asia to ensure their operations there don't pose risks to either worker health and safety or environmental quality
  - Envirocycle is leading the way with innovations in CRT recycling
  - Members of your industry, particularly Panasonic and Sharp, are also working hard with other stakeholders in the National Electronics Product Stewardship Initiative to recommend a national financing

system for the recovery of used electronics

- If I've failed to mention anyone, I apologize, and let me know about it
  - There's nothing I'd like better than to come back next year and read off a much longer list
- States are getting in on the action, too
  - Many of them are reviewing their laws and programs related to used electronics, and thinking about where to go next
  - Both California and Massachusetts have banned the land-filling of CRTs
  - California came close to setting a recycling fee payable at the time of purchase of TVs and PCs
    - California will be considering this legislation again later this year
- And of course I have to get a plug in for EPA
  - Our regional offices are spearheading a number of innovative projects to increase electronics reuse and recycling
  - Our west coast offices, for example, are taking a special interest in encouraging the "greener" design of electronics
  - EPA's Philadelphia office pulled together several mid-Atlantic states and other partners
    - And they collected over 2100 tons of used electronics
  - On America Recycles Day, EPA and other public and private partners collected more than 30 tons of old electronic equipment on the grounds of the Washington Monument
  - EPA is clarifying its waste disposal rules to make the recycling of CRTs easier

- And we're taking special pains to reach young people, who will use electronics way more in their lives than we have
  - We're working with the video arcade industry to put recycling messages on game screens when they're not in use
- As you can see, there's a lot going on, a lot more than I just described
  - So where do we go next?
  - How do we get all Americans to understand the importance of recycling used electronic products?
  - More important, how do we help them do it?
    - From what I see in my own neighborhood, most people want to recycle and NEED to recycle, especially after Christmas
    - Every new electronic toy or piece of electronic gear shoves the old one into an already crowded attic or, in my case, basement
    - But people in my neighbor, like people everywhere, don't know where to go or what to do
- So I've come here today to announce a new program
  - It's called the Plug In to Recycling Campaign
  - Its goal is simple
    - Increase the amount of electronics that are safely collected and recycled nationwide
  - This campaign is a part of a larger Resource Conservation Challenge, which was launched by EPA last fall and has two very ambitious goals: raising the overall national recycling rate to 35 percent, and cutting by 50 percent the generation of 30 different chemicals – all by 2005



- The Plug In to Recycling Campaign has a very specific target:  
everything your industry makes
- And that's why we need you to be our energetic partners in this effort
- Here's how it will work
  - EPA and our partners will put our resources together to get the word out about why and how Americans should recycle electronics
  - We expect to get the word out through local and national advertising, in garbage pickup bills, in public service announcements, in tent cards and posters in stores, and through electronics catalogs and web sites run by manufacturers, retailers, and recyclers
  - In partnership with the National Recycling Coalition, EPA is launching a new web site, [www.pluginrecycling.org](http://www.pluginrecycling.org), to inform people where they can take their old electronics for recycling and reuse
    - And that should give a boost to anyone considering setting up a collection center
- All manufacturers, retailers, and recyclers will be invited to join the Plug-In campaign
  - We're also inviting local governments, states, trade associations, and non-profits to join the Plug-In team
  - We expect our combined efforts to be in full force by Earth Day, April 22, 2003
- And Earth Day is only the beginning
  - The Plug-In campaign is intended to be the impetus for ongoing information and education about what to do with used electronics
  - We've got some ideas on how to make this happen

- Like the development of more comprehensive, up-to-date web listings of collection opportunities
  - Like more visible and user-friendly instructions to consumers
  - Like high-profile media spots with celebrity spokesmen to really catch the public eye
  - Like attractive incentives to consumers for returning their used products for recycling
- We'll be looking to our partners for other creative, effective ideas to help us all reach our shared goals
- This is an ambitious agenda
  - Fortunately, we've already signed up several major corporate partners
  - And they're doing a fantastic job helping us get the campaign off the ground
  - I'm thrilled to have the chance to thank them today in person
  - On this Environmental Awareness Day, it gives me great pleasure to shine a little light on their awareness, their ideas, their hard work to build a bright, plugged-in future
  - So let me read off their names, tell you a little about their accomplishments, and invite each of them up on stage to receive a token of EPA's deep appreciation
- First, AT&T Wireless
  - AT&T has hosted continuous collection events for mobile phones and their accessories at about 800 stores across the nation, as well as at 163 facilities that house their 32,000 employees
  - They're integrating Plug In To Recycling messages in their marketing

and public relations efforts

- And they're considering placing recycling messages in their customer phone bills
- I understand that Elizabeth Leach, Executive Director of Environmental Health and Safety at AT&T, is here today, and I'd like to invite Elizabeth to the stage to accept this certificate of appreciation
- Next is Best Buy
  - In partnership with state and local governments, Best Buy has committed to hosting 15 - 20 electronics collection events this year between March and November
  - Best Buy also will be integrating Plug-In messages in advertising, media alerts, and promotional materials, while looking at the placement of recycling messages on the Best Buy web site
  - I invite Paula Prah, Vice President of Government and Public Affairs at Best Buy, to join me here on stage
- Our next Plug-In partner is Dell
  - Dell will work with partners in higher education and government to host 5 - 10 electronics collection events this year
  - Dell also will include Plug-In messages in their marketing efforts
  - And they're considering the placement of Plug-In advertising in Dell's consumer catalogue, which is delivered to 27 million homes
  - Would Michel Glaze, Dell's Public Affairs Manager, please join me on stage?

- Envirocycle is also a Plug-In partner
  - Envirocycle has committed to supporting approximately 100 collection events in more than 12 states in the upcoming year, and dismantle domestically all materials they collect as well as those materials they handle for other collection programs
  - They will pay for promotion efforts at at least 5 percent of their municipal clients' collection events
  - And this year they will provide two free seminars for city and state officials to help them run collection events
  - Joe Nardone is Envirocycle's Marketing Director, and I'd like to invite him to the stage
- Recycle America is another of our Plug-In partners
  - Recycle America will distribute Plug-In materials at their e-depot sites nationwide and at municipally sponsored collection events
  - They'll encourage their local government clients to advertise the availability of electronics recycling options in their residential garbage pick-up bills
  - They'll also be joining with our other partners to publicize the Plug In To Recycling Campaign
  - Kevin McCarthy, Recycle America's Director of Electronics Recycling, is here to accept EPA's certificate of appreciation
- Finally, I want to show our appreciation to three other Plug-In partners: Panasonic, Sharp, and Sony
  - The three of them are working together on some very exciting projects
  - This year Panasonic, Sharp, and Sony together will sponsor at least 75

- 100 collection events in many parts of the country
- Each company then will pay for the recycling of its own products collected at those events
- All three will also pursue marketing and public relations activities promoting the Plug In To Recycling Campaign as well as electronics recycling in general
- And they'll arrange for the distribution of Plug-In materials at other events where they participate
- But the Plug-In campaign is only part of their commitment to the environment
  - Panasonic is also energetically involved in EPA's ENERGY STAR
  - ENERGY STAR is a partnership program that encourages energy efficiency and reduced energy use
  - Hundreds of companies around the country, including Best Buy and Dell, have already slashed their energy use through participation in this program
  - For four consecutive years, Panasonic has been awarded the ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year Award
  - Panasonic sells 400 ENERGY STAR consumer electronics products, and almost 200 ENERGY STAR office equipment products
  - I'd like to invite Dr. Paul Liao, Chief Technology Officer for Panasonic, to accept this certificate of appreciation
- Like Panasonic, Sharp is also an ENERGY STAR partner
  - The company sells approximately 200 office equipment products and 270 consumer electronics products that earn the ENERGY STAR
  - I'd like to invite Frank Marella, Manager of Corporate Environmental

Affairs at Sharp, to accept this certificate

- Sony, too, is a long-time ENERGY STAR partner
  - Sony was one of the first manufacturers to join ENERGY STAR for computer monitors in 1993
  - They were a Charter Partner in both the Audio/DVD and TV/VCR product areas
  - And they were recognized as an ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year in 1999 for consumer electronics
  - I invite Mark Small, Vice President of Environmental Safety and Health at Sony, to accept this certificate of appreciation
- Once again, thanks to all our partners in this new recycling effort
  - You're doing a great job, and I expect a lot of success in the years ahead
  - It's really encouraging to see such shining examples of product stewardship, voluntary action, and environmental responsibility in the business community
    - I'll do everything I can to let the world know about it
  - And I invite the rest of the industry to follow your good example and join us in this ambitious campaign
  - I look

forward to working in partnership with all of you so my family, and all our neighbors, can finally clean out our basements

- Now I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have for EPA or any of our Plug-In partners

